



STARTER KIT TO QUIT TOBACCO

Are you or someone you know thinking about quitting tobacco? Sailors and Marines have a higher rate of tobacco use than the civilian population^{1,2,3} and the results impact their health, their families' lives, and mission readiness. The data shows that almost 70 percent of current tobacco users want to quit completely.⁴

With those statistics, it's likely that if you know someone who is using tobacco, you know someone who wants to quit. However, the vast amount of information about how to quit tobacco can be overwhelming. The *Starter Kit to Quit* gives you a place to begin if you are thinking about quitting or supporting someone who is.

The *Starter Kit to Quit* includes tips, considerations, and specific actions the quitter or supporter can take throughout the four phases of tobacco use: thinking about quitting, preparing to quit, your quit day, and the first 30 days after your quit day. The journey isn't over after the first 30 days, but this will equip you with the information and tools to help you or someone you know get started! For more information and resources, visit the Navy and Marine Corps Public Health Center's [Tobacco Free Living Web page](#).



Four Phases of Quitting

1 Thinking about quitting

2 Preparing to quit

3 Your quit day

4 The first 30 days after your quit day



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Are YOU trying to quit using tobacco?

THINKING ABOUT QUITTING

If you are thinking about quitting tobacco, it can help to fully understand your reasons for using tobacco, challenges, triggers, and motivators for quitting before you try to quit. As you think about it, ask yourself the following questions:

- What made you start using tobacco?
- Why and when do you use it?
- What are your reasons for quitting?
- What motivates you to quit?



PREPARING TO QUIT

Once you have made the decision to quit, pick a quit date. Choose a quit date that makes sense in your life to increase your likelihood of success. Don't pick a date right before a big or stressful event. It's about the long haul for the weeks, months, and years ahead. Once you decide your quit date, it's time to prepare!

- Create a plan to quit. Without a plan, quitting tobacco can be even more challenging. Remember the motivators, triggers, and challenges you identified?
 - Make a list of motivators and keep it with you to remind yourself why you are quitting.
 - Develop strategies for avoiding or overcoming triggers to help you get out of your previous habits.
- Tell your friends, family, colleagues, and wellness professionals about your plan. CDC's [12 Tips to Get Support as You Quit](#) can help you identify the people in your life that can keep you accountable and offer support.
- Continue the conversation with your health care provider to incorporate any medical strategies into your plan. If you've been prescribed any medications as part of your plan, make sure you understand how to take them properly. For example, some medications must be started a week or so before your quit date.
- Identify goals and milestones ahead of your quit day and how you will reward yourself when you meet them.

ACTIONS:

After answering the questions, assess if quitting is something you are ready to do. Be honest. You must be ready to do it for yourself and not only for those in your life or at work.

- Learn why others quit to help you define your reason with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) [Reasons to Quit](#).
- Talk to your doctor or a health educator for personalized guidance and assistance to help with your quitting journey.
 - Ask about tobacco cessation counseling or other support opportunities to help you quit.
 - Discuss the use of medication or nicotine replacement therapy to determine if any are a good fit for you.

ACTIONS:

- Visit the following resources for more specific tips and examples for prepping and making a plan to quit:
 - [UCanQuit2.org](#) (DoD)
 - [Quit Plan](#) at [smokefree.gov](#)
 - [20 Tips for Quitting Tobacco](#) (Health Net Federal Services)
 - [Steps to Prepare](#) (CDC)
- Quitting smoking? Look for specific tips on CDC's [Quitting Smoking](#) site.
- Quitting smokeless tobacco? Look for specific tips on NIH's [Smokeless Tobacco: A Guide for Quitting](#).
- Get quit support on your phone by signing up for [SmokefreeMIL](#) or [SmokefreeTXT](#) or downloading the [QuitGuide mobile app](#).
- Find a tobacco cessation course or support group? Sign up in advance of your quit day!





Are YOU trying to quit using tobacco?

QUIT DAY

Your quit day is here! If you have prepared for your quit day by making a plan, you are better equipped to face the challenges in your journey to becoming tobacco free. Here are a few tips to help you on this day:

- ▶ Plan your day to avoid any triggers, and remind yourself of the reasons and motivators to quit. Have your coping strategies and distractors in an easy to reach place.
- ▶ Make sure you have removed all tobacco products including e-cigarettes from your environment to keep you from turning to any type of tobacco when temptation strikes.
- ▶ If possible, schedule a teeth cleaning appointment to start fresh.
- ▶ If you chose to use medication, make sure you are following the directions and consult your health care provider if you experience any abnormal or serious side effects.
- ▶ Take it one step at a time. The first day will be challenging – break the day into increments if it makes it easier to cope.
- ▶ When it gets challenging, review your reasons for quitting.

ACTIONS:

- ▶ Read CDC's [Steps to Take on Your Quit Day](#) for more tips for this day.



30 DAYS AFTER QUIT DAY

The first few weeks after your quit date are going to be challenging. Don't forget why you are doing this! Whether it is for your health, for your friends and family, to save money, or any other reason, keep that list of motivators close to you to remind yourself. A few items to consider as you start your quitting journey:

- ▶ It's normal to have cravings and go through symptoms of withdrawal and uncomfortable feelings. Remember these feelings are temporary and will lessen over time.
- ▶ Distract yourself with other activities when a craving strikes to get through it. Use the four Ds to help:
 - Deep breaths
 - Do something else
 - Drink water
 - Delay for ten minutes
- ▶ Once you have reached your goals of being tobacco free, treat yourself. You've earned it!
- ▶ Try not to slip, but if you do, it's OK. Just make sure to get right back on track and think about new strategies to address whatever triggered you to use tobacco again.

ACTIONS:

- ▶ Attend counseling or support group sessions.
- ▶ Try to stick with your plan and if it's not working, revise your plan.
- ▶ Read UCanQuit2.org's [Twenty-Five Things You Can Do in 5 Minutes Besides Use Tobacco](#) to learn alternative behaviors to take when craving hits.
- ▶ Seek support through your network when you need it.



The first 30 days can be the most challenging part of quitting, but the journey isn't over. Check out the following resources for additional tips and information to stay quit:

- ▶ Visit your local health promotion office or health promotion personnel.
- ▶ Talk with your medical or dental provider at your military treatment facility.
- ▶ Call 1-800-QUIT-NOW to reach your state's quitline.
- ▶ Visit the Department of Defense's education campaign [UCanQuit2.org](#).
- ▶ Visit Department of Health & Human Services' [BeTobaccoFree.gov](#).



Are you SUPPORTING SOMEONE who is trying to quit using tobacco?

THINKING ABOUT QUITTING

Do you know someone who is thinking of quitting? Whether it's your buddy, significant other, family member, or a patient, understanding your role in their journey to quit tobacco can help them be successful. Ultimately, it takes that person to make the decision to quit, but you can be supportive as they decide by following these tips:

- ▶ Be understanding. Quitting is hard. It's an addiction, not just a bad habit.
- ▶ Offer your support in their journey. They need people who care about their success to keep them on track.
- ▶ Don't lecture or nag about their tobacco use, but be positive if they express to you their interest in quitting.
- ▶ Do you use tobacco too? Maybe think about quitting also, and support each other through the process.

ACTIONS:

- ▶ Look for an opportunity to ask the individual about their tobacco use to understand what makes them use tobacco, so you can be aware of potential future triggers and motivators for using and quitting.
- ▶ If you are a health professional, visit UCanQuit2.org or smokefree.gov's [Resources for Health Care Professionals](#) for useful resources.



PREPARING TO QUIT

Once they have decided to quit, they should pick a quit date. You can support them in their preparation in advance of the quit date. Follow the tips below for ideas to help someone prepare for their quit date:

- ▶ Do they need help with creating a plan to quit? Offer ideas or suggestions for how they can respond to triggers or cravings once they begin.
- ▶ Be supportive and positive if they come to you letting you know they have a plan to quit.
- ▶ Ask them how you can help and what support they would like from you. Sometimes it's as simple as being a distraction or if you are tobacco user, not asking if they want to go outside with you while you use tobacco. Those quitting may also ask you not to use tobacco in front of them. Be mindful of their request.

ACTIONS:

- ▶ Visit UCanQuit2.org's [Help Your Hero Quit](#) for more information and resources on helping someone such as family member or friend quit tobacco.
- ▶ Read about your role on smokefree.gov's [12 Tips to Support Your Quitter](#).
- ▶ Whether you are a health professional or care for someone who is quitting, visit BeTobaccoFree.gov for resources to help support a quitter.





Are you SUPPORTING SOMEONE who is trying to quit using tobacco?

QUIT DAY

Their quit day has arrived! This is a big event for the person quitting and will likely be a challenging day as they get started. Below are a few suggestions for how you can offer support:

- ▶ Plan activities with the quitter to be supportive!
- ▶ Provide encouragement throughout the day as needed, and congratulate them after completing a successful tobacco-free day.
- ▶ Don't pester them with questions about whether they have used tobacco today or not.

ACTIONS:

- ▶ Read CDC's [Steps to Take on Your Quit Day](#) to become familiar with what the quitter will experience.



30 DAYS AFTER QUIT DAY

This is where the real work begins, and when the quitter may need the most support. In order to increase their likelihood of success, follow these tips:

- ▶ Be patient, and don't take the withdrawal symptoms personally, which can include irritability and anger.
- ▶ Offer distractions throughout the month. Plan tobacco-free events and make sure they attend.
- ▶ If they slip up, that's OK. Continue to provide encouragement and support to get back on track.
- ▶ As they meet their goals and milestones, celebrate their success with them.

ACTIONS:

- ▶ Read UCanQuit2.org's [How to Help Someone Quit](#) to be able to help the quitter overcome challenging situations and understand how to respond to someone battling cravings.



¹ Navy Marine Corps Public Health Center EpiData Center Department. Fleet and Marine Corps Health Risk Assessment 2014. <http://www.med.navy.mil/sites/nmcphc/Documents/health-promotion-wellness/general-tools-and-programs/HRA-2014-report-final.pdf>. Published 2015. Accessed September 2015.

² Centers of Disease Control and Prevention. Current Cigarette Smoking Among Adults—United States, 2005–2013. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2014;63(47):1108–12. Accessed September 2015.

³ U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The Health Consequences of Smoking—50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General (http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/sgr/50th-anniversary/index.htm). Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health, 2014.

⁴ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Quitting Smoking Among Adults—United States, 2001–2010. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 2011;60(44):1513–19.